

Dr. M'Graw or Argon No. 76  
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## Observations on *Cynanche Trachealis.* or Croup.

Croup is an inflammatory affection of the mucous membrane of the larynx and trachea; to which children are peculiarly subject, from the age of three months to that of six or seven years. It is a very rare disease after puberty. It is divided into two species by some writers, the inflammatory and spasmodic. This division, however well founded it may be, is not I think very important, as it does not materially influence, or lead to any practical difference in the mode of treatment.

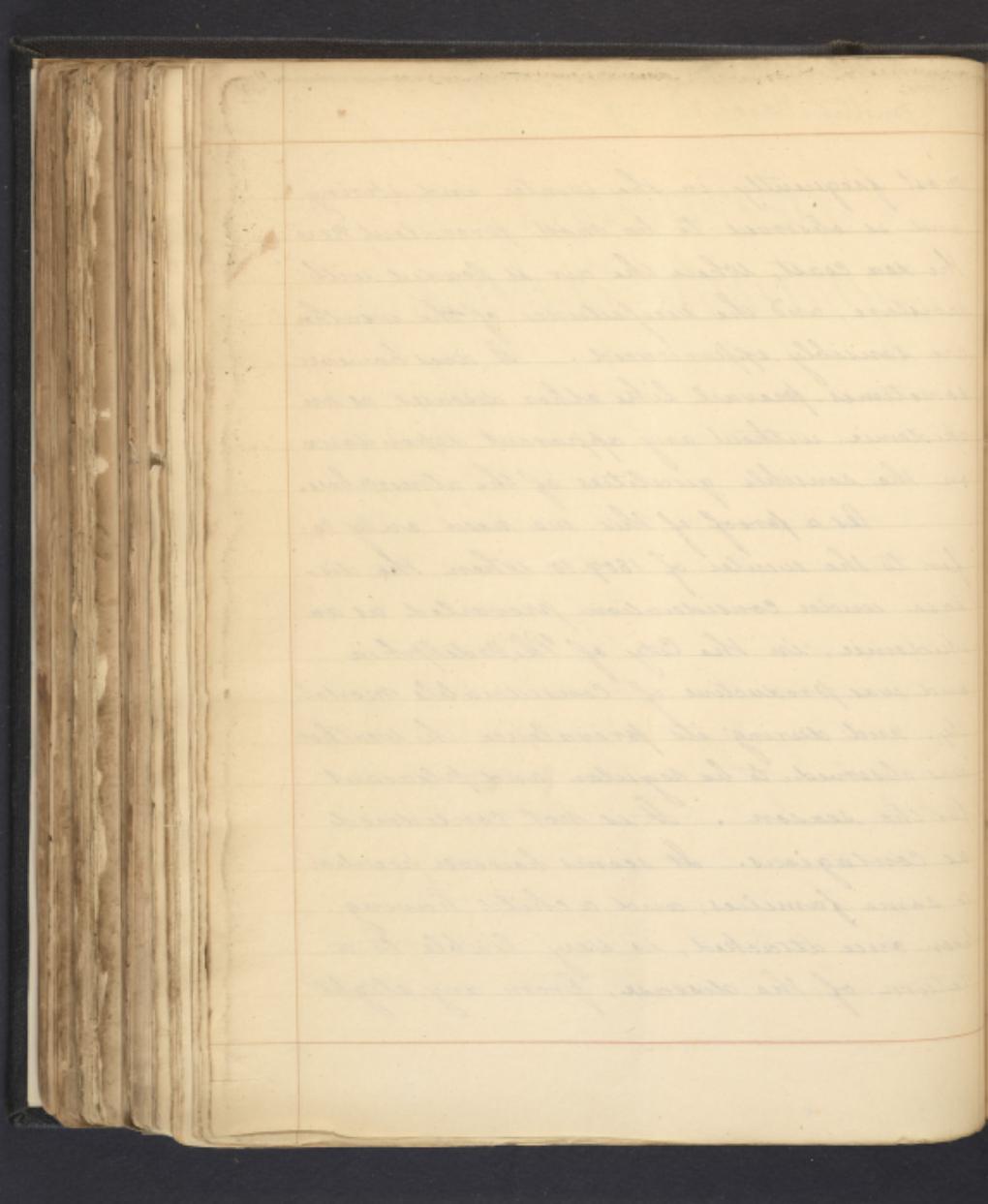
The application of cold or humidity seems to be the general cause which excites this disease into action. It occurs

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most frequently in the winter and spring, and is observed to be most prevalent near the sea coast, where the air is loaded with moisture, and the vicissitudes of the weather are sensibly experienced. It does however sometimes prevail like other diseases as an epidemic, without any apparent dependence on the sensible qualities of the atmosphere.

As a proof of this we need only refer to the winter of 1809.10 when the disease under consideration prevailed as an epidemic, in the City of Philadelphia and was productive of considerable mortality, and during its prevalence the weather was observed to be regular and pleasant for the season. It is not considered as contagious. It seems however peculiar to some families, and a child having been once attacked, is very liable to a return of the disease, from any slight



exposure to cold or wet, and it generally happens that subsequent attacks are more violent than the first. Children of robust constitutions are thought to be most liable to it.

The disease generally comes on in the evening, after the child has been exposed to the weather during the day, and often after a slight Catarrh of some days standing. At first the voice is observed to be hoarse accompanied with some difficulty in breathing, he shows a disposition to shun his play-fellows, and sits apart from them dull and inactive. His illness does not prevent him from going to sleep: but soon he awakes with a very peculiar cough rough and stridulous, which has been compared to the croaking of a cock, or barking of a dog. his breathing is now very laborious, each inspiration being accom-

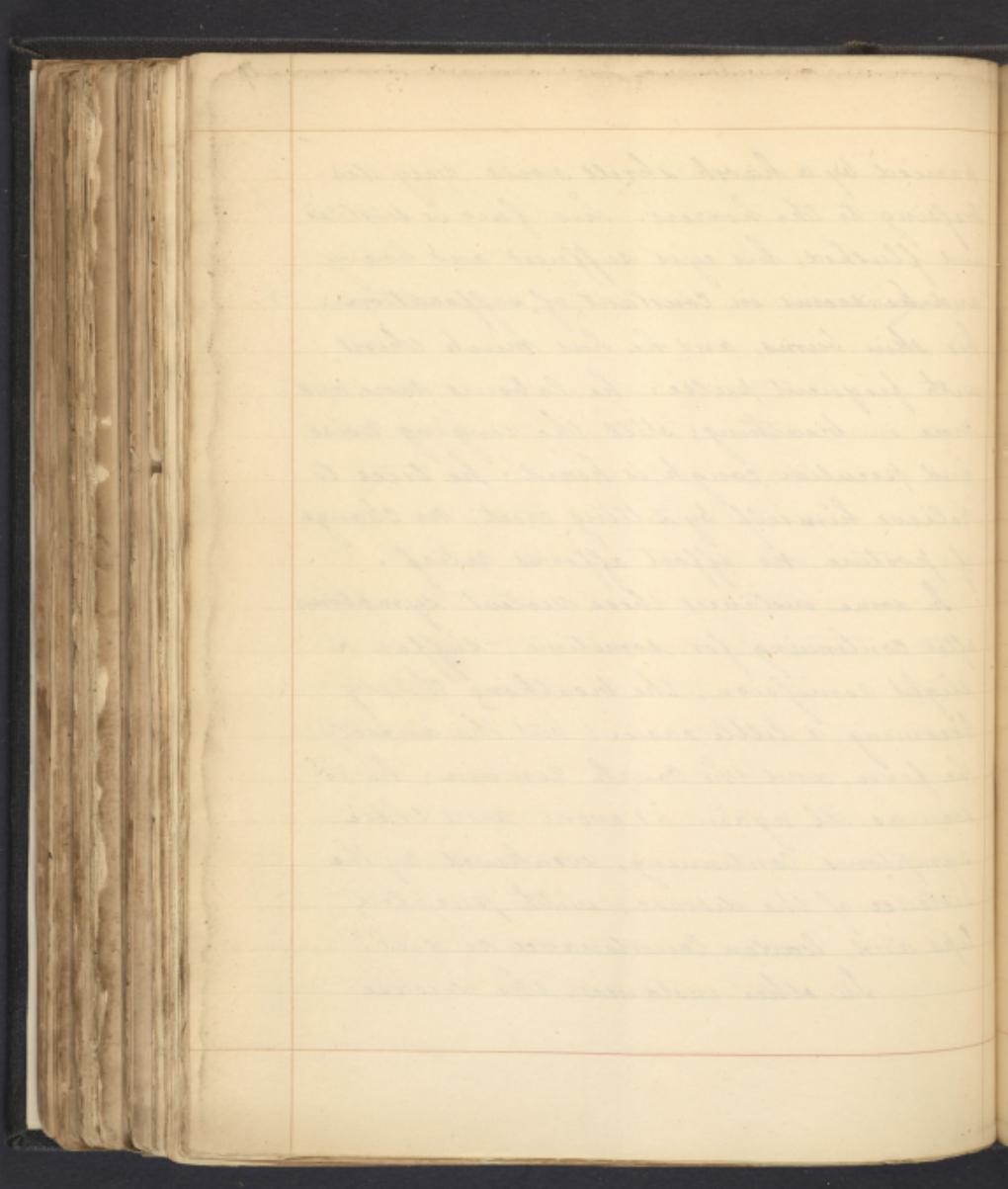
a young boy

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panied by a harsh shrill noise very distressing to the hearers. his face is swelled and flushed, his eyes suffused and heavy and he seems in constant <sup>of</sup> suffocation: his skin burns, and he has much thirst with frequent pulse: he labours more and more in breathing; still the ringing noise and peculiar cough is heard: he tries to relieve himself by sitting erect, no change of posture, no effort affords relief.

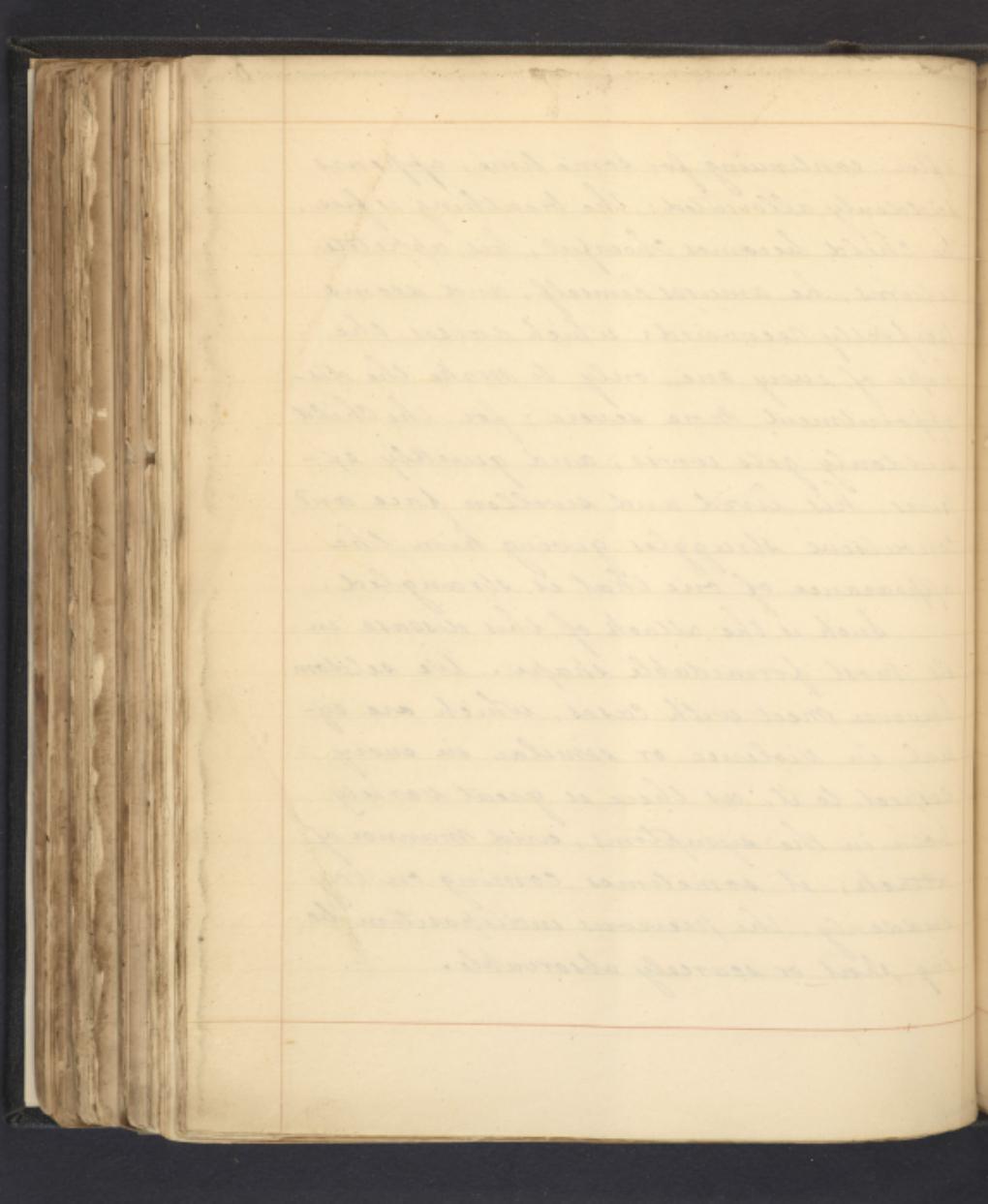
In some instances these violent symptoms after continuing for sometime, suffer a slight remission; the breathing thereby becoming a little easier: but the anxiety the fever, and the cough remain; he is soon as ill again as ever: and those symptoms continuing, weakened by the violence of the disease, with purpled lips and leaden countenance he dies.

In other instances, the disease



after continuing for some time, appears suddenly alleviated; the breathing is free, the child becomes cheerful, his appetite returns, he amuses himself, and seems perfectly recovered: which raises the hope of every one, only to make the disappointment more severe; for the child suddenly gets worse, and quickly expires, his livid and swollen face and convulsive struggles giving him the appearance of one that is strangled.

Such is the attack of this disease in its most formidable shape. We seldom however meet with cases, which are equal in violence or similar in every respect to it. as there is great variety both in the symptoms, and manner of attack; it sometimes coming on very suddenly, the previous indisposition being short or scarcely observable.



The duration of the disease is very various; in some cases it proves fatal in a very few hours, in others not for a day or two or longer; much depends in this respect on the degree of inflammation, the violence of the spasm, and the strength and constitution of the child.

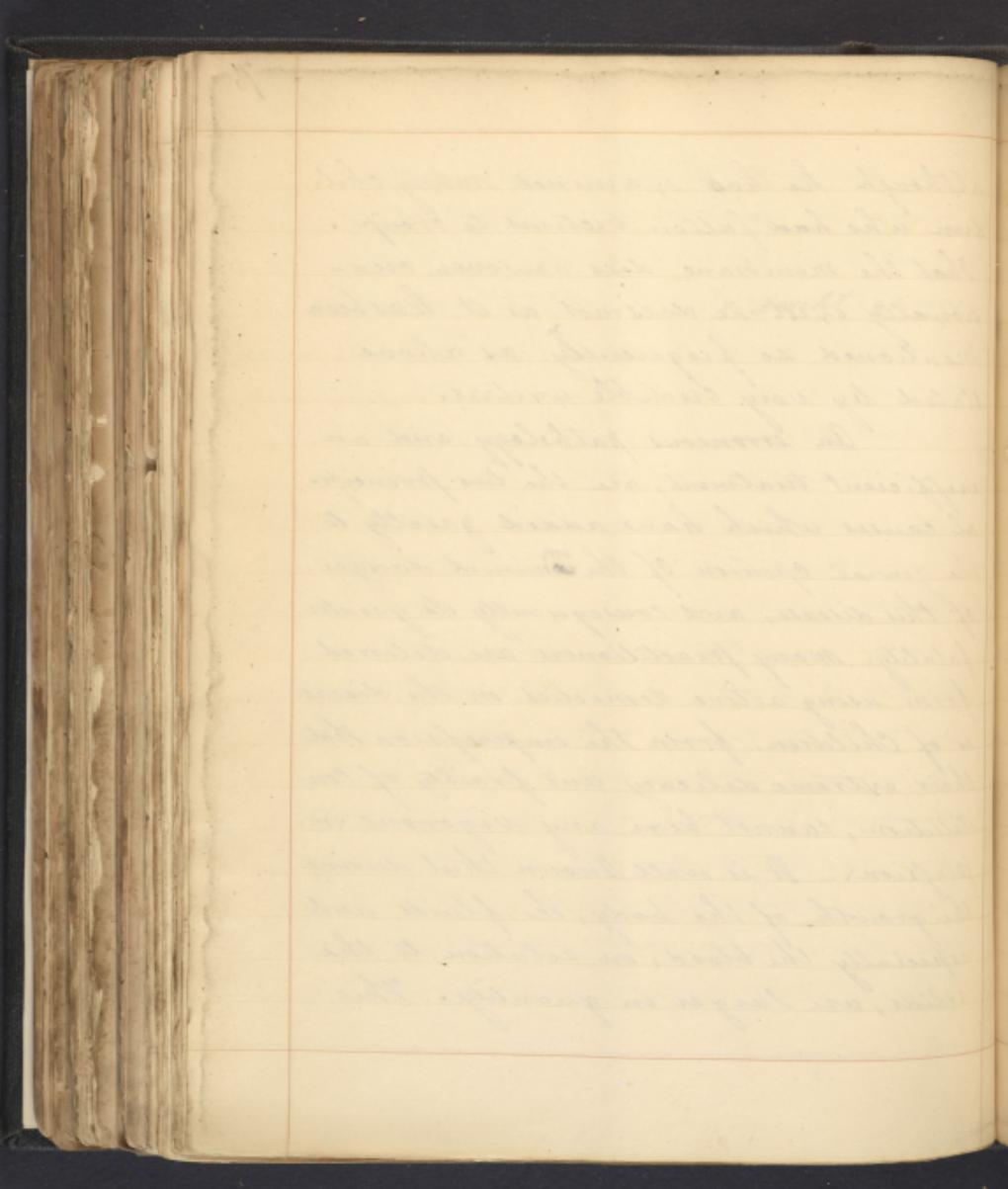
Those cases end best where the breathing is least sonorous, the fever most moderate, and the cough early attended ~~with~~ with expectoration.

From the testimony of very respectable writers, dissection has always discovered on the inside of the larynx, a lymphatic incrustation, or layer of membranous looking substance. This membrane has not as far as I know ever been discovered from dissections in this country. Our worthy professor Dr. Chapman states that he has never met with it.

x doubt x deny

although he has examined many children who had fallen victims to croup. That the membrane, does however, occasionally exist he does not, as it has been mentioned so frequently, as above stated by very credible writers.

An erroneous pathology and an inefficient treatment, are the two principal causes which have added greatly to the general opinion of the <sup>im</sup>minent danger of this disease, and consequently its greater fatality. Many practitioners are deterred from using active remedies in the diseases of children, from the impression that their extreme delicacy and frailty of constitution, cannot bear any vigorous impression. It is well known that during the growth of the body, the fluids and especially the blood, in relation to the solids, are larger in quantity. This

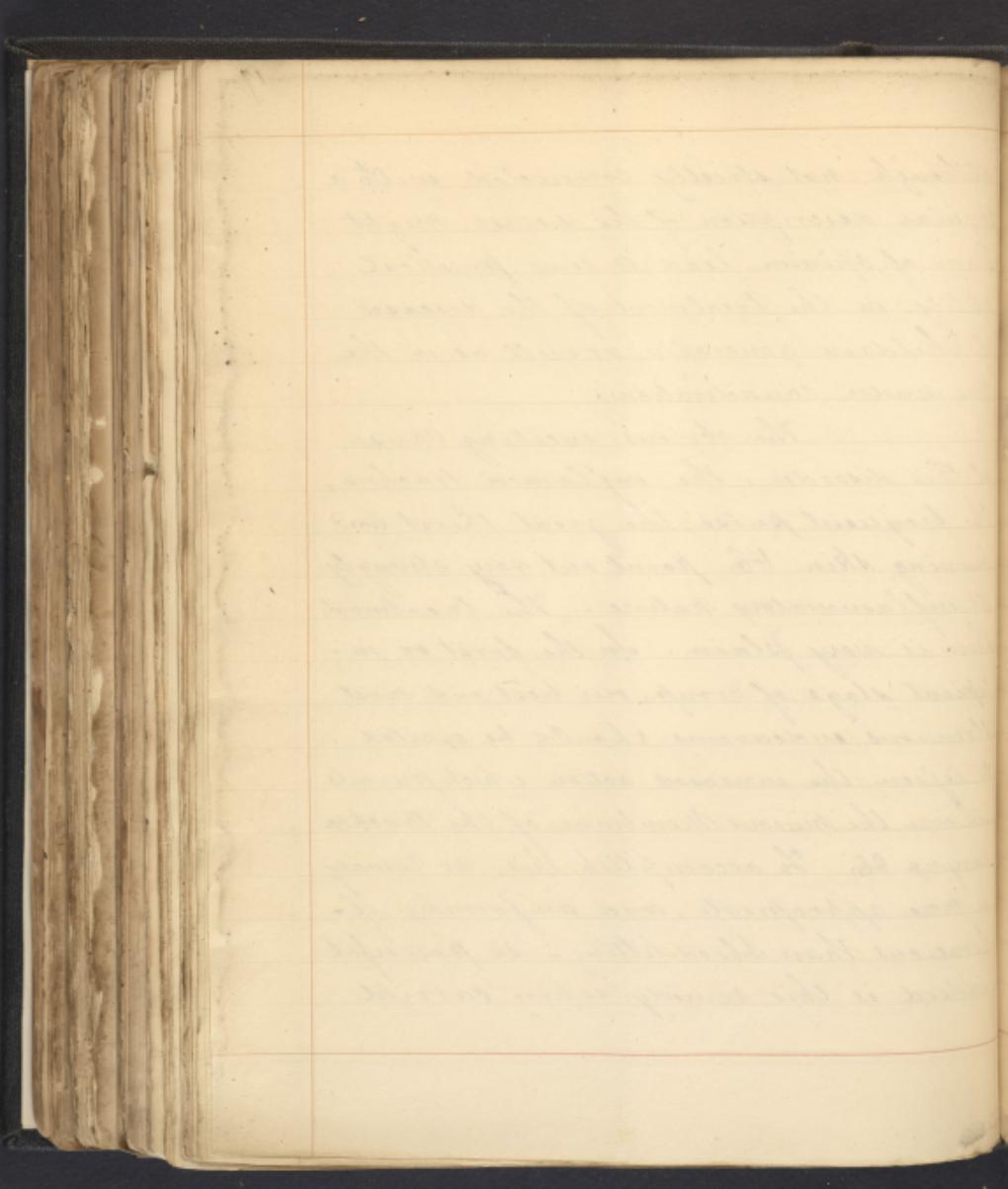


fullness of their vessels, and the greater excitability of their systems, render Children peculiarly liable to inflammatory affections. It follows, therefore that they require often to be bled. Dr. Chapman states that his own experience confirmed by that of others practitioners, has satisfied him, that bloodletting may be used with as much safety, and decidedly with greater advantage in the complaints of Children, than in those of adults. He says that if they do not at the time bear the loss of blood better, they recover much sooner from its effects. The prejudice against bleeding to any extent in Children, I am persuaded is one principal reason why the disease I am treating of has so frequently terminated unfavourably. This opinion induced me to offer the above remarks, which



although not strictly connected with a regular description of the disease, might I am of opinion lead to some practical utility in the treatment of the diseases of Children generally, as well as in the one under consideration.

The obvious exciting cause of this disorder, the inflamed trachea, the frequent pulse, the great thirst and burning skin &c. point out very strongly its inflammatory nature. The treatment then is very plain. In the first or incipient stage of croup, our best and most strenuous endeavours should be exerted to lessen the increased action which prevails all over the mucous Membrane of the trachea larynx &c. To accomplish this, no remedy is more appropriate, and uniformly efficacious than blood-letting - so powerful indeed is this remedy when carried

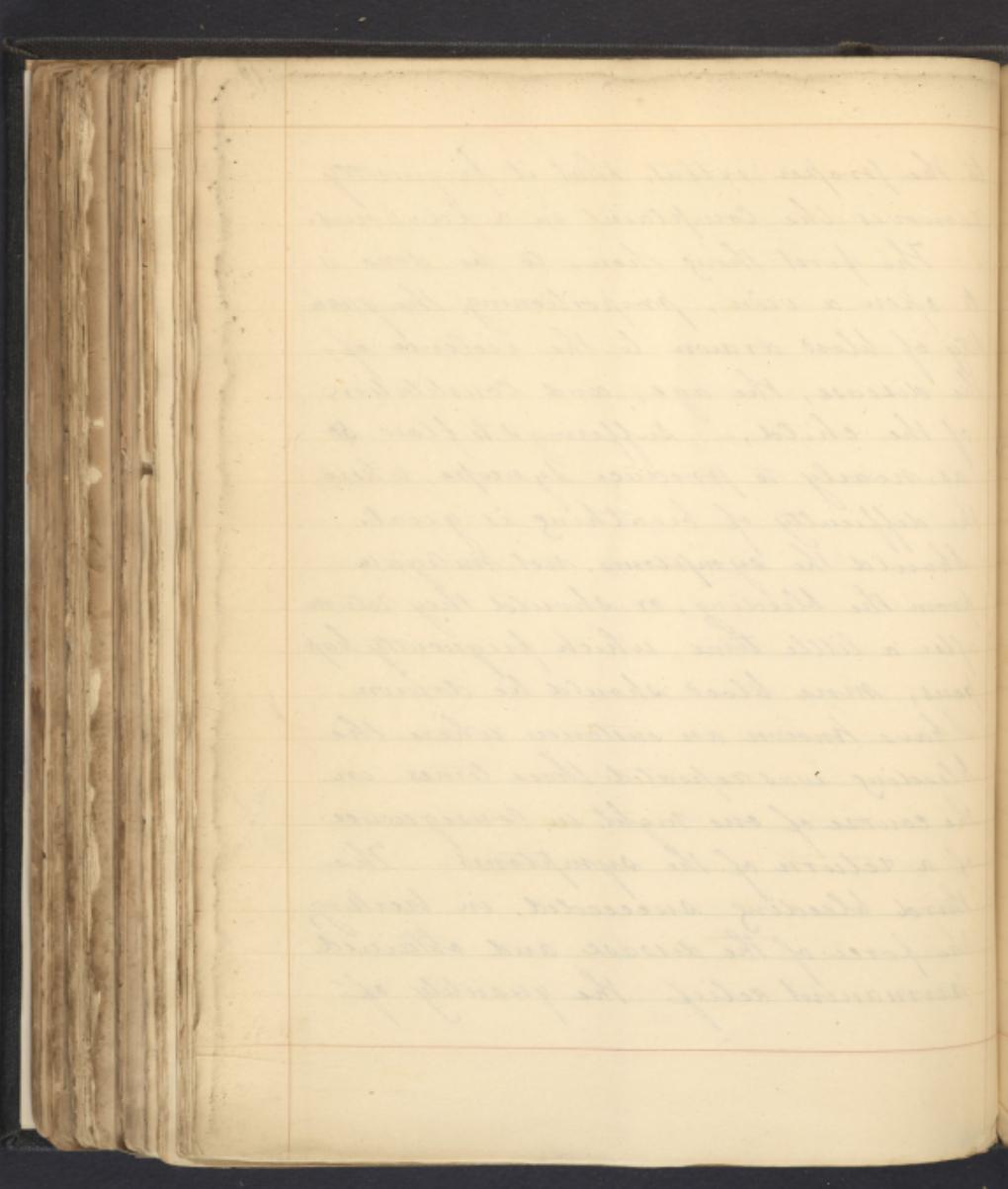


to the proper extent, that it frequently removes the complaint in a few hours.

The first thing then, to be done is to open a vein, proportioning the quantity of blood drawn to the violence of the disease, the age, and constitution of the child, — suffering it to flow so as nearly to produce Syncope, where the difficulty of breathing is great.

Should the symptoms not mitigate from the bleeding, or should they return after a little time, which frequently happens, more blood should be drawn. I have known an instance where the bleeding was repeated three times in the course of one night, in consequence of a return of the symptoms. The third bleeding succeeded in breaking the force of the disease and obtained permanent relief. The quantity of

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blood taken in this case amounted in all to 3XX. Immediately after Venesection we should endeavour to purge the child very freely, and for this purpose Tartarised antimony, being one of the most certain and powerful of the emetics should be preferred, it should be given in solution and at short intervals. At the same time the child should be put into the warm bath for ten or fifteen minutes. This is a very valuable auxiliary. It rarely fails to promote the operation of the emetic, and will, indeed, alone sometimes cure the disease.

When by these means active vomiting is excited great relief is obtained. Besides unloading the stomach the medicine will also produce a diaphoretic effect. If the first emetic does not relieve, the cough and difficulty of



breathing it may be necessary to repeat it. In conjunction with the above remedies, it will be found highly serviceable to apply a large blister to the throat. The sooner it is laid on after the invasion of the disease the greater will be the chance of its proving beneficial.

The attack must be extremely obstinate if it does not now yield to the combined operation of the above remedies. It will however occasionally continue with little or no abatement. Under these circumstances, where the preceding remedies have failed, and the symptoms are so alarmingly violent as to demand immediate relief, Dr. Chapman recommends bleeding ad deliquium ani-  
mi. When pushed to this extent he says blood-letting is almost invariably successful. The bowels are to be kept

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-some words all have undergone and do I  
recommend slight changes to them to re-  
-serve all the original spirit of the paper  
-and all the original words & the new  
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-I recommend you to do the same  
-and I am sure you will be  
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-and I would say in this case  
-you may do what you desire and nothing  
-more all the society and individual  
-is in division because of the way  
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open by the free administration of some purgative; the calomel is the best. It is recommended, by Dr Chapman, to be given in the largest possible dose, (after the force of the disease is broken), in order that it may speedily and actively purge.

In this particular stage of the disease he says, a thorough opening of the bowels carries off the lingering symptoms, obviates a relapse, and confirms the convalescence. Where cough or hoarsness, with tightness of the chest, and deficient expectoration remain, the decoction of the polygala senega is to be used as an expectorant. He thinks that it is in extinguishing the remains of croup that it (which by some is recommended <sup>in</sup> the commencement) displays its best properties.

I have now finished what I had to say, relative to, symptoms and

and a sample of cinnamon  
and a piece of ginger root.  
After the water had been  
boiled, the pieces were  
taken out and washed in  
cold water. Then the  
water was strained through  
a cloth and the liquid  
was poured into a glass  
bottle. This was done  
in the morning and the  
water was used throughout  
the day. It was found  
to be very effective  
in curing the disease.

best mode of treating Cynanche  
Trachealis; My own experience of the  
disease being very limited, I had no-  
thing to offer as resulting from it, as  
new or different from the general  
mode of treatment. In the preceding  
observations my aim was not, origin-  
ally, but to give a correct descrip-  
tion of the disease & its treatment in  
as brief a manner as I could con-  
sistent with <sup>the</sup> importance. hoping there-  
fore that an indulgent eye will  
be extended over its many im-  
perfections, I submit with great  
diffidence this paper to your  
inspection. ——————

